

White Swan Tavern
231-235 High St.
Chestertown, Md.

News Agency housed in one small area of first floor is public, however, rest of building is private.

One of the area's few remaining Taverns, the White Swan is a two and a half storey dormered brick building with colorful glazed headers in the Flemish bond pattern on the High St. facade. An interesting cat slide roof and the original summer kitchen are at the rear.

One may assume, from the chain of ownership, that the White Swan was built mid-18th century by Joseph Hopper Nicholson who was a Militia Colonel, Sheriff of Kent County, trustee of the Kent Free School, one of the first Visitors and Governors of Washington College, and father of James, John and Samuel Nicholson, all famous Americans in our country's naval history.

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC White Swan Tavern (however, I can find no reference to this)

AND/OR COMMON

in mid-19 C also called American Hotel

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

231-235 High St.

CITY, TOWN

Chestertown

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First

STATE

Md.

COUNTY

Kent

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☒ PUBLIC☒ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED☒ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

☐ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☒ NO only news agency

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☐ PARK☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☒ OTHER**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

estate of Thomas W. Eliason

Telephone #:

-

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Chestertown

VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Md. 21620

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Office of the Clerk

Liber #: JFG 2

Folio #: 250

STREET & NUMBER

Kent County Court House

CITY, TOWN

Chestertown

STATE

Md.

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

unknown

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

K-49

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Tavern was but one of many in Kent County, of which few survive. It is a two and a half storey dormered brick structure with colorful glazed headers in Flemish bond pattern on the High St. facade. The original summer kitchen is still at the rear of the Tavern with an interesting flat headed dormer. It is constructed of wide board sheathing.

The north of High St. facade was at one point stuccoed, however, a great deal of this has peeled off to show the lovely brick work. The building is set back from the sidewalk with presently a brick area built out to the sidewalk, under an added porch type roof. From left to right on the first floor there are a 9/6 double hung window with wooden lintel, a Victorian double door with wooden lintel, a central double door, again of a later period, two 6/6 double hung windows with wooden lintels, and at the corner a doorway to a staircase which goes up and into the building directly next door. Between the first and second floors there is a raised belt course of 2 rows of bricks. The second floor has 5 9/6 double hung shuttered windows. On the wooden shingle roof are 3 6/6 windows in dormers with broken pediments. At either end are large chimneys which are stuccoed at the top. Both are built out from the house, rather than within it.

The east side shows the line of the most interesting catslide roof. As previously stated, the chimney is built out from the house in the 2½ storey section and to either side of it on the second floor level are 6/6 double hung windows. In the addition one finds a 6/6 double hung window at a slightly lower level and another chimney, a tall one built within the wall. The bargeboard breaks for both chimneys. There are only a few glazed headers on this facade and the bond is basically American, with 3 rows of stretchers, then one of headers, etc.

The west side is completely blocked by another building almost attached to the Tavern. There is a chimney at this end in the 2½ storey section.

At the lower level of the rear section, on the catslide roof, are 2 6/6 dormers. The roof here is of tarshingles. From left to right facing the building is an extension into the summer kitchen, the brick work begins a later period door with 2 light transom and another door, being wider and 8 paneled, a 9/6 double hung shuttered window, and a window which is shuttered closed, but which one would assume is also 9/6. Over the two door ways is a small pent roof, now continuation of the cat slideroof. The brick work on the rear is also 3 rows stretchers, 1 of headers.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

8 SIGNIFICANCE

K-49

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES mid 18th century

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

While the White Swan, as local legend calls the Tavern, was once one of many area Taverns, it is now one of only a few remaining. Built mid 18th century it is a two and a half storey dormered brick building with colorful glazed headers in the Flemish bond pattern on the High St. facade. An interesting cat slide roof is at the rear and the original summer kitchen still exist there also.

It seems fair to assume that Joseph Hopper Nicholson, Sr., father of Joseph, Jr., and James, John and Samuel Nicholson of our nation's maritime history fame, had the White Swan constructed. He owned the property from 1733 when the previous owner had been a shoemaker, until about 1792. The deed for the transfer of the property to his wife, Mary, refers to the property as #76, house and lot where he lived, and also "which was lately in the tenure and occupation of Joseph Nicholson, elder." Joseph Nicholson(elder) was a Militia Colonel, Sheriff of Kent County, trustee of Kent Free School and one of the first Visitors and Governors of Washington College. Whether or not he built it as a Tavern is unknown.

Presently the property is tied up in an estate and it is hoped that a sympathetic owner will restore it.

Fred G. Usilton in his History of Chestertown, p. 16, states that Washington stayed here in October 1774. He does not reference this information. Usilton, on p. 16, also states that this building was a hotel in 1826 and 1775 and that the "Sons of the Revolution" formed there.

K-49

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

F. G. Usilton's History of Kent County
Fred. G. Usilton, History of Chestertown, no date, no pub.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Kathleen B. White, Historic Site Surveyor

Oct. 1976

ORGANIZATION

Md. Historical Trust, City of Chestertown

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

(White Swan, American Hotel ?)
High St., Chestertown

- JFG 2/250 7/7/54 George T. Wilmer to Thomas W. Eliason, #76 with dwelling store house stabling and other improvements thereon.
Wm. Wilmer, deceased, and father of George, gave wife, Ann B., power to sell, but by fault in execution it did not go through, so George does it.
- JFG 2/248 7/21/50 Ann Brice Wilmer, Trustee of Wm. Wilmer, husband, to Thomas W. Eliason, \$2,000.00 cm, dwelling store house, stabling and other improvements.
- BC 8/81 2/19/14 Isaac Carrell to Wm. H. Wilmer, $\frac{1}{2}$ of #76.
If his brother Abraham Charles Augustus Carrell dies before he reaches 21 Isaac will inherit the other $\frac{1}{2}$ and convey it. Abraham does, so Isaac conveys that $\frac{1}{2}$ to Wm. Wilmer too, but William does before Isaac conveys it by deed.
Wilmer's will of 5/4/26 in Alexandria, Va.
- JNG 3/14 7/30/33 Isaac now conveys last $\frac{1}{2}$ property to Ann Wilmer to do with as directed in husband's will.
"On which are a Tavern and buildings and store house"
- TW 1/660 6/7/01 John Bordley to Isaac Carroll, who wills it to his sons, Isaac and Abraham, £1,000 cm, buildings and improvements.
- BC 3,427 3/18/93 Mary Nicholson, Queen Annes County, to John Bordley, houses and buildings. £350 cm.
- BC 3/348 9/24/92 Joseph Hopper Nicholson (brother of James, John and Samuel of maritime fame), Queen Anne's County, to Mary Nicholson, Houses and buildings. This was willed by Joseph Nicholson, elder to his wife, Mary, and son is releasing it to her as executor. house and lot where he lived #76. "which was lately in the tenure and occupation of Joseph Nicholson, elder."
- 4/285 8/22/33 Simon Wilmer to Joseph Nicholson (Militia Colonel, Sheriff of Kent County, trustee of Kent Free School, and one of first Visitors and Governors of Washington College.) £45.
a certain John Lovegrove, shoemaker of Chestertown, had made over and acknowledged to him by the afore-said Simon Wilmer lott #76, the same being neglected to be recorded, and John Lovegrove sold it to Joseph Nichilson, and Simon Wilmer is agreeable to selling it to Joseph Nicholson.
houses and buildings where Lovegrove lives.
no record of anything to John Lovegrove nor any other mention of this property via Wilmers.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Washington, D.C. 20240

K-49



HISTORIC PRESERVATION CERTIFICATION

APPLICATION — PART 1

(Pursuant to the Tax Reform Act of 1976)

Instructions: Applicant should read the instructions carefully before completing application. No Certification may be made unless a completed application form has been received (P.L. 94-455). Use typewriter or print clearly in dark ink to complete the application form. If additional space is needed to complete Part 1, use the reverse side or a separate plain sheet of paper clearly indicating the owner's name and mailing address. Part 1 of this application may be completed and sent to the appropriate State Historic Preservation Officer at any time during the year, and may be sent separately or with Part 2.

PART 1 EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

1. NAME OF PROPERTY: White Swan Tavern

Address of property: Street 231 High Street

City Chestertown County Kent State Maryland Zip Code 21620

Name of historic district in which property is located: _____

2. DESCRIPTION OF PHYSICAL APPEARANCE:

(see instructions for map and photograph requirements—use reverse side if necessary)

3. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

(use reverse side if necessary)

Date of construction (if known): c. 1730-c. 1795 ☒ Original site ☐ Moved Date of alterations (if known): 6/78 - 11/80

4. NAME AND MAILING ADDRESS OF OWNER:

Name White Swan Tavern, Inc.

Street Route #3, Box 209

City Chestertown State MD. Zip Code 21620

Telephone Number (during day): Area Code 301-778-2300

I hereby attest that the information I have provided is, to the best of my knowledge, correct, and that I am owner of the property described above.

Signature White Swan Tavern, Inc. Christian Hume Date 8/24/80

For office use only

The structure described above is included within the boundaries of the National Register historic district and ☒ contributes ☐ does not contribute to the character of the district.

The structure ☐ appears ☐ does not appear to meet National Register Criteria for Evaluation (36 CFR 60.6) and ☐ will likely ☐ will not be nominated to the National Register in accord with the Department of the Interior procedures (36 CFR 60).

The structure is located in a district which ☐ appears ☐ does not appear to meet National Register Criteria for Evaluation (36 CFR 60.6). ☐ will likely ☐ will not be nominated to the National Register in accord with Department of the Interior procedures (36 CFR 60), and ☐ appears ☐ does not appear to contribute to the character of said district.

Signature [Signature] Date 8-22-80
State Historic Preservation Officer

This property has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Department of the Interior (36 CFR 67) and, if subject to depreciation under section 167 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954:

☐ is hereby certified a historic structure

☐ does not contribute to the character of the historic district and does not merit certification as a historic structure. Reasons given on the attached sheet:

Signature _____ Date _____
Keeper of the National Register

K-49

HISTORIC PRESERVATION CERTIFICATION APPLICATION ---- PART 2

for WHITE SWAN TAVERN, CHESTERTOWN, MD.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

An Historic Structure Report was prepared on the White Swan Tavern using matching funds from H.C.R.S. through the Maryland Historical Trust. This report has been an invaluable aid in interpreting the character of the building at various critical times during its lifetime.

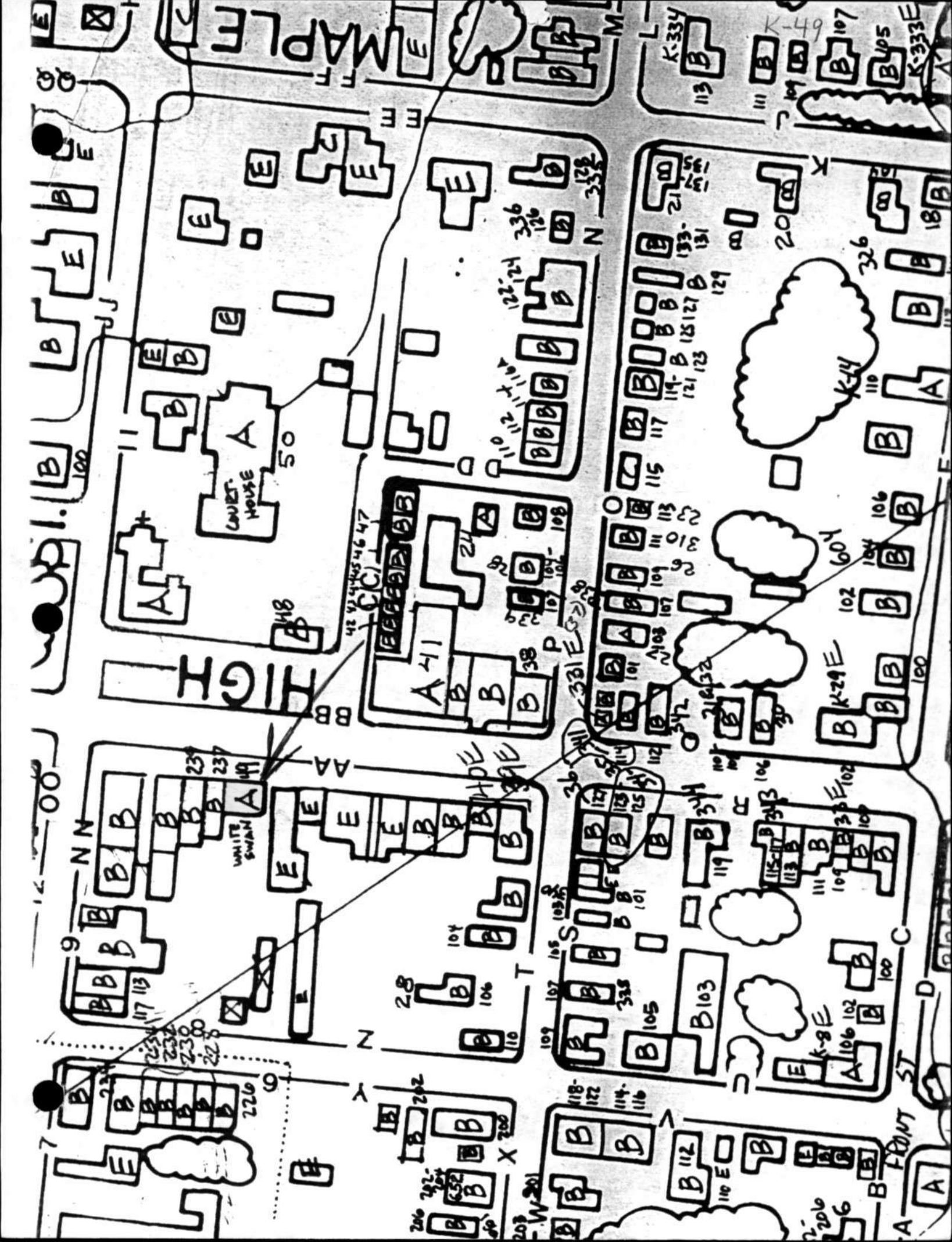
In filling out the application for certification, the Historic Structure Report is the chief source used to describe existing features. The format in the Report is generally the same as used to describe the work done/to be done in the application.

It must be pointed out that the decision to restore the White Swan Tavern to the c.1795 appearance was based upon three important facts: 1) the building achieved its most important and significant form when used as a tavern between 1795-1855, 2) there was more architectural evidence from this period than from the previous period, and 3) the building is to be used as an inn.

Nearly all decisions involved in the restoration were based upon available evidence in the building. Where evidence was not available by examination of existing materials or archeological facts, the simple nature of the building was always a factor in deciding upon various details.

In some instances the new use for the building, as well as current codes played a major role in planning the restoration.

The impact which the total sum of the restoration details has upon the building is to return it to the appearance it had when in use as a tavern. Wherever existing features were too late for the restoration or where the original features were too deteriorated to use, new features were installed. Wherever the original feature was salvageable, it was restored. One exception to the "late detail" was re-using the 1867 porch posts which were of such a design that they could have been used in the tavern period.



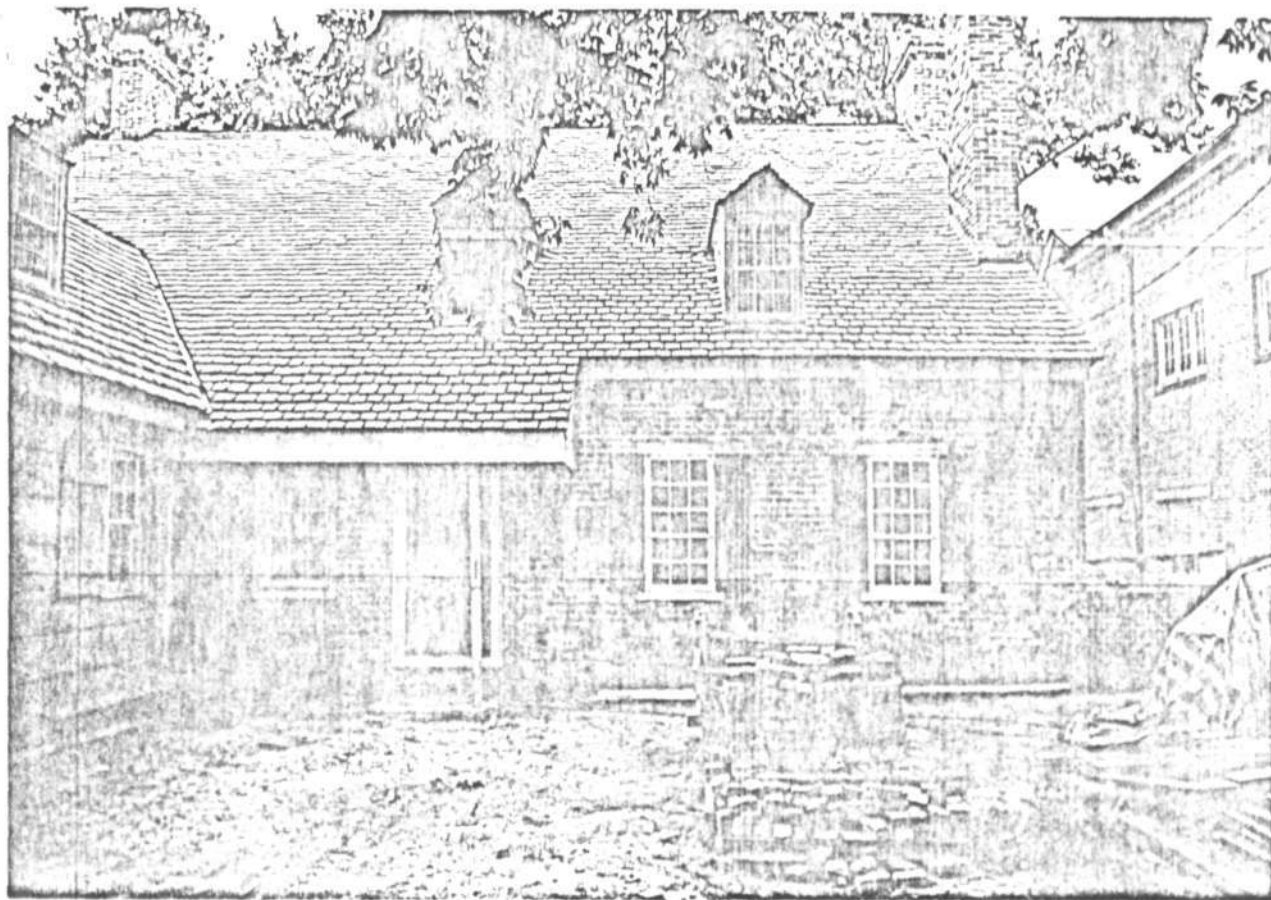
K-49
White Swan Tavern
229-235 High St.
Chestertown
Chestertown Quad.
Kent County



Former Sterling Dry Store
(see heading) program
1237 High Street,
Beverly Hills.

K-49





K-49



K48 Tavern 231-235 High

1/77 N



K 49 Tavern 23' - 235 High
1/77 N+E



K48 Tavern 231-235 High

1/77 S